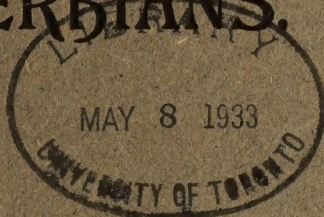


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— THE —
HEROIC SERBIANS.



An Appeal for Help

BY

Colonel SPENCER BROWNE, C.B., V.D.

Australian Imperial Force.

(PASSED BY CENSOR.)

Sherren, Weymouth.



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THE SERBIANS.

A HEROIC PEOPLE.

THE PILLARS OF THE BALKANS.

BY COLONEL SPENCER BROWNE, C.B., V.D.,
AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

[*Lately Capt. C. B. Norman, a brother of the late Field Marshal Sir Henry Wylie Norman, a former Governor of Queensland, lectured on "The Balkans" to Australians in England. Capt. Norman was surprised to hear that the Serbians and their history were not well known in Australia, and he suggested the writing of these articles (three) so that the sympathy of our people might be more fully awakened.*]

Serbia, thou
Hast thought us careless and far off: Know now
Thy name to us is sudden drums outspeaking
And tortured trumpets crying in the night!

So wrote F. W. Harvey in a fine sonnet on Kossovo Day, June 28th, 1916, which was celebrated in England because, for the first time for centuries, the Serbs were not able to celebrate their great national festival in their own country. The Serb is now a hostage in his own land, held under the heavy heel of the Hun and his Magyar accomplices, or he is a soldier fighting shoulder to shoulder with the British and the French and the Italians on the Macedonian front, or he is a landless wanderer—crippled by war and awful suffering—living by the Samaritan-like help of those on whose shores he may be cast. And what is meant by Kossovo

Day? It is the anniversary of a great Serbian disaster, of a great battle fought as far back as 1389 when the Turks defeated the heroic Slavs. But so glorious was the Serbian struggle, so full of proud appreciation are the people, that they sing to-day of their sacrifice. Mr. Lloyd George recently spoke of the part played in this great war, and of the wars since 1354 by the Serbians, and referring to the "Songs of Kossovo" said that the nation which could so glorify one of the cruellest days of its history was filled with imperishable heroism.

It is a thread of heroism running through the great fabric of Serbian history this appreciation of events at their value. The Serbians fought under the banner of Christ at Kossovo; fought valiantly and were beaten—crushed. Why should they forget it, forget their cause or their glorious dead? They then were the pillars of the Balkans, set up and barring the way against the Turkish encroachment of Christian Europe, and they failed not through lack of gallant hearts, but because they had the well-organised hosts of Turkey before them, and in the rear the pressure of the Maygars who sought to dominate the Balkans. And so Kossovo, the tragedy and glory of the Serbians for all time, is sung to-day. The literature of the country is full of remembrance, a soft mist of song enfolds the spirits of the heroes who fell on Kossovo Plain. "Things are hard for us, hard since Kossovo," is a homely saying in Serbia. To this Day, we are told by a Serbian writer, the women of Montenegro and Herzegovina wail for Kossovo as they do after a death, instead of singing of it. When an amazed scholar in his travels asked them who had died, he was told: "Nobody has died; but we wail for Lazar and Milosh who fell at Kossovo." So are the names of the brave remembered! During the great retreat of our allies, with Germans and Austrians holding their front, and the treacherous Bulgars assailing them from flank and rear, there was a dramatic incident as the great battle-field was approached. Alice and Claude Askew tell of it thus: "We remember approaching the plain of Kossovo during the early part of the retreat, riding slowly with the army. The air seem to beat and quiver to the tramp of soldiers' feet. The men hardly spoke; they kept a heavy silence as they marched, a tragic silence." Then an officer rose up suddenly in his stirrups and addressed the glowing plains: "If only the dead could rise! Ah, if only our dead heroes could rise from their graves on the plain and lead us back into battle! Lazar, Milosh Obilitch, Ivan Kosanchitch why do you slumber? Is Serbia to be lost a second time?" And the same distinguished writers say: "The dress that the peasant women all over Serbia wear, the long, straight, white robe, heavily embroidered with black wool round the hem and sleeves, is worn as mourning for the mighty captains who perished on the historic battlefield." Owen Meredith has translated one of the Serbian Songs of Kossovo. It truly is worth reading:

"There resteth to Serbia a glory,
 A glory that shall not grow old ;
 There remaineth to Serbia a story,
 A tale to be chanted and told !
 They are gone to their graves grim and gory
 The beautiful, brave, and bold !
 But out of the darkness and desolation
 Out of the mourning heart of a widow'd nation,
 Their memory waiteth an exultation !
 Yea, so long as a babe shall be born,
 Or there resteth a man in the land—
 So long as a blade of corn
 Shall be reap'd by a human hand—
 So long as the grass shall grow
 On the mighty plain of Kossovo—
 So long, so long, even so,
 Shall the glory of those remain
 Who this Day in battle were slain.

It must not be thought from all this that the Serbs are a truculent nation, loving war. They hate it. They are, as are most Slavs, a peaceful, home-loving, cheery people and they have accepted war only when it practically has been *forced* upon them. They might have avoided war with the Turks on the Day of Kossovo; they might have been submissive and avoided war when Austria and Germany laid criminal demands upon them in 1914.

"The Byzantine Empire was reduced to Constantinople and its environs, and the Turkish tide approached the very heart of the Serbian Empire" (I quote from V. R. Savić's "The Reconstruction of South-Eastern Europe") "The decisive battle was at hand. The Turks, who found the Serbs a most stubborn enemy, made overtures, begging them . . . to open them the gate of Central Europe. The Serbian nation and its rulers were sorely tempted. They knew that their forces were too small to resist the swollen Turkish flood. No help was forthcoming from any other quarter. Europe, divided and terrified, looked mute and motionless upon the unequal struggle. Should the Serbs betray their noble mission as the champions of Christendom? . . . No and Never!" The Serbian songs say that the Tsar Lazar received a letter from the Virgin Mother asking him which Kingdom he preferred, the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of the Earth. Tsar Lazar and all his nation chose the Heavenly Kingdom. So in 1914 the Serbians again chose the path of Right paved as it is with broken homes, and desolated lands, murdered people, and women shamed and slain by German and Austrian lust. The gallant nation might have made easy terms with Germany and Austria and avoided war. The Central Europe Powers wanted a clear run to Constantinople,

to Salonica, and a Balkan control. The Serbians might have made a big commercial bargain; but they would not sell their souls. As on the Day of Kossovo they fought for the preservation of Christain Europe, so in 1914 they fought for their own honour and to uphold their undertakings to the peace-loving nations of the world. The historical parallel is there. The Serbians proved the pillar of the Balkans five hundred years ago as in this vast war.

Perhaps the foregoing may illustrate in a slight way what the soul of Serbia really is. The people are deeply religious; they were so in the old days before they acknowledged the suzerainty of the Roman Emperors and adopted the Christian religion, which M. Savic says, together with Greek civilization spread among them. It was during the reign of Mavricius the Byzantine (582-602) that the Emperor's patrols brought in some Slav prisoners. They were, we are told, tall, broad-shouldered men, armed only with pipes, and in appearance quite harmless and good-natured. Being asked who they were, they answered: "We are Slavs coming from the far-off sea. We do not know steel or arms, we graze our herds, make music with our pipes and do not harm any one." And in the Eighth Century it was customary for these Slav people (the Serbians of to-day) to feed and comfort sick or wounded enemies who were found after the battles. They became leaders in religious architecture, in art and poetry. Before Kossovo their country was settled and prosperous. A Greek writer who visited Serbia about the end of the thirteenth century praised the simplicity and healthy atmosphere of the Court life. M. Savic says: "The code of the Emperor Dusan proclaimed at Skoplje in 1349-53—one of the finest written monuments of Mediæval Europe—is a proof that already in the first half of the fourteenth century Serbia was socially and politically a well-organised State." Thomas Watkins in 1789 wrote of the Serbians at Ragusa: "They have more learning and less ostentation than any people I know, more politeness to each other and less envy. Their hospitality to a stranger cannot possibly be exceeded; in short their general character has in it so few defects that I do not hesitate to pronounce them (as far as my experience of other people will permit me) the wisest, best, and happiest of States."

The Serbian of to-day, the peasant-soldier, is by nature a lover of the soil and a peaceful rural life. In the vicissitudes of the Balkan wars M. Savic was with the soldiers, sharing their life and their difficulties, and he says: "He (the Serbian) cherishes no dreams of conquest or aggression. From time to time he would sing some of those official war-songs learned in barracks, but ever as he marched rapidly through the fertile fields of Old Serbia and Macedonia, as he climbed the steep, snow-clad crests of Albanian mountains, or pushed on through narrow gorges of rushing rivers, his heart was with his parents and children at home, he dreamt only of his

orchards on the hills of Lumadia, of his maize fields in the valley of the Morava. And when his heart was filled with home-sick longing, he would give expression to it by singing his simple village song: 'O Moravo—dear village of the plains, They have never understood a war of conquest, as all their wars have been strict wars of self defence, to stem the tide of foreign invasion. Like all Slav people the Serbo-Croats are peaceful and confiding; they look upon war as a terrible calamity, and are very glad if they can escape it; and this is easily understood. The soul and character of the Serbo-Croat nation were formed during long centuries of prehistoric life." Away there in the Carpathian woodlands they dwelt peaceably for centuries. They lived in communes, and their character was moulded in thousands of years of good neighbourliness and alliance. "The Serbo-Croat is sincere, peaceable, easily roused, but always very easily appeased, never gloomy, having always something childlike about him."

ARTICLE II.

"Serbia: Austrian Pressure and the War."

It was for over 500 years that Serbia suffered under Turkish misrule, not patiently, but with an occasional dash for Freedom. To deal with recent history, it may be said that the first ray of light came in 1867, when a war of freedom was entered upon as a reply to Turkish tyranny and the concentrated stings of murder and outrage. Again, as at Kossovo, the Turks triumphed, but the civilised world was thrilled by a succession of Hun-like horrors which marked the war, and a year later Russia entered the lists to help the Christians of the Balkans. At the close of the Russo-Turkish War Serbia was restored to her old status as a Kingdom, but Serbian territories in Europe, peopled by Serbians, were left in the hands of other nations, and notably in the hands of Austria-Hungary. And the policy of the dual monarchy had been sedulously directed by Germany since 1866 to the Balkans. It was Bismarck who "suggested to the Austrian Court and dynasty that compensation for the loss of Italy, and the ejection from Germany, lay in the Austro-Hungarian expansion in the Balkans." M. Savic succinctly describes the policy of the *Drang nach Osten* in his book referred to in my first article and vividly shows the action of the Magyars in selling themselves—for the interest of Germany—body and soul to the Hapsburgs and becoming "the most subservient pillar in the grandiose scheme of a German Central Europe from Ostend to Constantinople." Then began the work of subduing the Southern Slavs. In course of time there came the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "purely Serbian provinces inhabited solely by Serbian people of the purest stock." The annexation crisis will be well remembered and Serbia's firm attitude on behalf of her people made it clear that until absolutely crushed she would not relinquish her claims to nationhood. Austria-Hungary was ready and eager to accomplish the crushing. Serbia was marked down for destruction, and the dual monarchy awaited the propitious moment. Persecution followed persecution, and there came in a policy of absorption, the system of Trialism which was to bring Croatia-Slavonia as a new element into the dynastic control of the House of Hapsburg. In September, 1912, Prince Schwarzenberg declared that a territorial increase of Serbia represented an immediate danger to Austria-

Hungary, and "the monarchy must hinder it." This feeling was accentuated by the result of the Balkan Wars of 1913. Austria-Hungary asked Italy to join her in an attack on Serbia, but the request was refused. Then in 1914 came the meeting of the Kaiser and the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria at Konopisht and the compact for breaking Serbia. All that now was required was a direct motive, and the assassination of the Archduke at Sarajevo gave it. M. Savic says: "For those who conspired against European peace and liberties the tragedy of Sarajevo was the finest opportunity for letting loose their evil designs. In vain Serbia in answer to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum submitted in nearly every point, and went further than any independent State had ever gone before, in her wish to spare herself and the world from the ordeal of our days. . . . At last when Vienna, appalled by the inevitable consequences, showed some signs of hesitation and wavering, Berlin and Budapest joined hands and forced upon Europe the Day for which they had yearned so long and so ardently." Serbia did not cause the war, but she was a cause of it, as she was the stumbling block to Austro-Hungarian expansion.

Something more should be said of the tragedy of Sarajevo. It has been alleged that the death of the Archduke was accomplished in the interest of Serbia. Nothing could be more false. It was the outcome of a fanatical desperation such as occurs almost invariably in small circles when the soul of a people is shaken by some great national crisis. The policy of the responsible statesman of Serbia towards Austria, the policy of all cool-headed patriots was "cautious and conciliatory, avoiding even a shade of provocation or discourtesy." The news of the tragedy was received by the people generally with genuine regret, and by the well-informed with grave foreboding as well. The demands of Austria were impossible if Serbia was to remain independent, but there was a very confident hope that an agreement would be reached. Still Austria was out for war, and behind her was the sinister mask of Prussian aggression and the strongly organised force of Germanic and Magyar pressure. It was on July 25th, 1914, that Serbia recognised that once again she would have to fight—her third war in two years, and before she had recovered her strength. On the day named the people were stupefied by the news that the hardly-won peace was again to be broken. Again the homely peasantry were to be drawn from their little farms and hurled into the seething cauldron of human strife.

The Austrians thought it would be sufficient to "occupy Belgrade and hang a few hundred influential citizens." There was no hurry, no great dash such as the Germans made through Belgium. The delay allowed the Serbians to mobilise 350,000 men with whom to face the 500,000 Austrians who were on or ready for the frontier. With 250,000 troops Austria moved in through the north-west of Serbia, abandoning the idea of a frontal attack on

Belgrade, but on August 20th and 21st, 1914, the Serbians inflicted a severe defeat on the enemy who had looked for an easy victory. The Austro-Hungarians in the portion of Serbia which they had invaded were guilty of unspeakable atrocities. Neither sex nor age was spared, and the Gospel of Frightfulness was here illustrated as in the lands on which the heel of the Hun had set its bloody print. In September the Austrians began a fresh offensive, but on the Cerni Verk they were again defeated with sanguinary losses. On September 10th the gallant descendants of the heroes of Kossovo drove the enemy across the Drina. Six weeks later the armies of the Hapsburgs, now 320,000 strong, pressed the Serbians severely, and the last-named being short of artillery a withdrawal took place. Valavo was taken and then Belgrade was evacuated. The Austrians—and indeed many sad hearts in Serbia—thought the resistance was over, but our gallant Allies received ammunition supplies, and on December 3rd they began another offensive. A crushing defeat was inflicted. Valevo was retaken, and on December 15th the Serbians were again in their capital. Belgrade was theirs once more. “In ten days the Serbian victory over five Austrian Army Corps was complete. Since the days when Scipio saved Rome from Hannibal, or when England destroyed the might of Spain, the world has never seen such a spectacle, and never has victory been more deserved.” Those are the words of one who was with the heroic Serbians throughout the operations. But the victory of the little nation over the great had its drawbacks. The thousands of Austrian sick prisoners were sent to Serbian villages, and with them they carried the terrible spotted fever. This spread and caused thousands of deaths. The Serbian doctors, true to the traditions of their generous race, went fearlessly amongst the distressed enemy, and over 30 per cent. of those noble-spirited professional men died—they gave their lives for their enemies. We proudly quote the inspiring words that no greater love is there than that of the man who lays down his life for a friend. What of the Christ-like love of the man who lays down his life for his enemy? In fighting the terrible disease many British doctors and nurses also died. And they too made the supreme sacrifice to help the enemy sick.

In her operations against Serbia Austria lost 330,000 men, of whom 68,900 were prisoners, besides vast stores and fighting material. A writer says: “The real and everlasting glory belongs to the Serbian peasant soldiers, who, after a war that had lasted for twenty-seven months, after trials and hardships unheard of among other European armies, after sustaining great losses of men and material, still found the strength to rise from the depths of despair, and to shatter the overwhelming forces of a well-equipped and disciplined enemy. Only the passing of two or three centuries are needed to make the glorious heroism of the Serbian soldiers stand

out as a legend to the generations that are to come." The heroes of Kossovo, the splendid followers of the Tsar Lazar, left for the soldiers of Serbia an ideal lofty and beautiful, and in the generations to come when the Jugo-Slavs are united with their national aspirations realised, the people will link those who won the victories of 1914 with those who died as bulwarks of Christian Europe in 1389.

"The Crushing of Serbia"! There were hard days ahead for this brave people. In the summer of 1915 the Germans having achieved successes on the Russian front, saw the necessity of sending help to Austria. Mackensen was entrusted with a new army, mainly German, and in September, 1915, it was massed along the Save and the Danube. All being ready on that front, Bulgaria issued an order for mobilisation on September 23rd, and joined the Germans and Austrians. Though outnumbered vastly on both fronts, Serbia would probably have been able to hold her ground but for the overwhelming predominance of the German artillery. Her Allies were unable to help her except with some British and French guns; the allied forces at Salonica were practically helpless as Bulgaria had duped the Entente; and Greece dominated by Constantine, the Kaiser's brother-in-law, proved traitorous in refusing to comply with the treaty which provided for mutual help in the event of an attack by Bulgaria. Serbia, that handful of heroes, stood with the might of Germany and Austro-Hungary confronting her on the north, and the Bulgarians on her flank and rear. The result could never have been in doubt, yet the Serbian army fought with desperate courage and under most skilful generalship. The withdrawal of Serbia's army from Serbian soil was not accomplished without severe losses; but both the great Middle Europe enemies and the treacherous Bulgarians suffered greatly also. The Allies with a weak force endeavoured to help the withdrawal by way of Krivolah, but had themselves to retire. The Allies would have been able to help had they reinforced the Serbians earlier, but it is doubtful if the debacle could have been wholly prevented. M. Savic's words may be quoted as illustrative of the closing scenes of one phase of a great military tragedy: "It was on the memorable Kossovo Polé that the Serbian army and nation realised that the great tragedy of their history was to be repeated. The curtain rose upon the last act of Serbian tragedy. Fate had yet some fearful sufferings in store for them. Last year, as in 1389 on the eve of the battle of Kossovo, the Serbian King and nation were forced to chose between the Kingdom of Heaven and earth: to make peace with the hereditary foes and to betray the noble cause of European freedom and liberty or to suffer national crucifixion. Now as then, the Serbs did not hesitate. They preferred honour and martyrdom to shameful peace and treason. Like true heroes of Kossovo, without fear they had accepted battle on a front 800 miles long, and for two months they had kept in abeyance the overwhelming forces of three military

States single-handed. An ally—Greece—betrayed them ; the others, through blunders, were unable to come in time to be of assistance. The struggle was in vain, and the Serbian State, which had resulted from so much fighting and noble self-sacrifice, was crushed by a shameful coalition of its old-time foes and by the treacherous connivance of an ally.”

ARTICLE III. (AND LAST).

*“The Retreat through Albania; the Army Re-organisation;
again in the Fighting Line; and the
Sufferings of the People.”*

Overpowered, disappointed, facing the terrible ordeal of an exodus with a strong enemy on their heels the Serbian Army lost practically everything but honour. Even in those terrible days of biting despair the descendants of the warriors of Kossovo studied primarily not their own convenience but the general welfare of the great cause of the Allies. Two courses were open to them : to march to Salonica to join the Armies of the Allies or to face a passage in the depth of winter through the inhospitable mountain regions of Albania. The last-mentioned course was chosen. Had the Serbians retired on Salonica they would have had half a million Germans, Austrians and Bulgarians on their heels and the Allies at the Greek port were not sufficiently strong to have resisted such a force. It has been said that at that time an attack on Salonica would have resulted in a success for the enemy. Salonica would have passed out of Anglo-French hands and the Central Europe Powers would have secured one of the salients in their scheme of territorial expansion. So into the Albanian mountains went the Army of Serbia and the pursuing forces there lost their great advantage for they could not take their heavy artillery into the rough country. Without the preponderance in artillery German, Austrian, and Bulgar dared not attack. The Serbians yet could sting. This gave the chance to the Allies in Salonica to fortify their front and secure reinforcements. Much is to be said of the retirement of the Serbians through Albania but this first is to be understood : their steadfastness, readiness for sacrifice, and their indomitable and unselfish courage saved the position in the Balkans and especially at Salonica for Britain and France. Without the Serbian sacrifice it is not unlikely that we should have had to get out of the Greek port and so, in the strategic sense, have removed from the side of the enemy the constant menace of a breach in the communications between Germany and Turkey. Further, we should have seen Greece thrown by the Kaiser's brother-in-law “Dear Tino” into the arms of the Mittel Europe confederation and a serious bar interposed

against our then prospective action from Egypt against the Turks over the water.

I have spoken with Serbians and with our own people who were associated with our splendid Ally in that terrible march of death through the Albanian mountains, and never has there been a suggestion that the Serbians considered there was due to them even a thought of recompense for the sacrifices made. It may be said here that from first to last the Serbians have never held out their woes in the lime-light. These gallant people have learned how to suffer in silence. They are too chivalrous to boast or to brag. But they have suffered and are suffering. The stories of what they have undergone, of what they are still undergoing — stories authenticated up to the hilt — are almost enough to make one despair of human kind and even of Christianity after a test of nearly two thousand years. I will not tell in print any of the stories that have been told to me; but this may be said: that when the awful chapters of the crucifixion of Serbia come to be written the civilised world will stand numbed and dry-eyed. Agitation and tears are for the small sorrows of life. In view of the bleeding heart of martyred Serbia what adequate expression is there in all the ordinary emotions of human kind? To me it is awful that women and men of our race can eat or rest in peace while a Serbian suffers. Money is little enough to give to them God knows; but it will help to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and provide comforts for the sick. The Serbians are no beggars; they are a people who always have been well able to provide for their frugal wants; but now those within their country's boundaries are pillaged and starved, and those without must take the stranger's crust. Such is the condition of Allies as loyal and brave as Britain has ever had by her side.

When it became obvious that the Serbian soldiers could fight no longer on their own soil there was thrown upon the General Staff all the great task of withdrawal. Only an experienced military man can appreciate what the withdrawal meant with exhausted troops and with a very short supply of ammunition. The task was however accomplished, or rather the remnants of the army were able to get through Albania, though we are told that only those who were in the retreat can witness to what a hell it was. The Montenegrin and Albanian mountains were crossable only by goat-tracks and so the field guns and transport waggons had to be destroyed in the sight of the troops, and pack horses only could be used for such supplies as were carried. In this retreat one may find some resemblance to the conditions under which the remnants of Napoleon's Grand Army straggled back from Moscow over the snow-covered Russian wilderness. With the Serbians were a few Britishers who have told the story of the awful pilgrimage — starvation and death and the madness through suffering which is

worse than death. Savic says: "Only an army possessing super-human endurance and unconquerable spirit could meet such things and not cease to exist altogether. But the time-honoured ideal of a free and united country was living in these martyr soldiers, and it gave them strength to pass through the Albanian hell to new life and activity, which they are manifesting splendidly on the Macedonian front."

To gather up the scattered units and take them to a hospitable Mediterranean isle, to clothe and feed them and nurse them back to strength occupied some months, but the wonder of it all is not that those Serbian soldiers recovered vitality, but that they were willing and eager to again strike a blow for the world's freedom and their beloved land. But the ordinary troops had high examples: The old King Peter and that virile soldier, the Prince Regent Alexander. In the most critical hour in fighting against Austria, King Peter visited the trenches, and said to the men: "Heroes, you have taken two oaths: one to me your King, and one to your country. From the first I release you, but from the second no man can release you. But if you decide to return to your home, and if we should be victorious, you shall not be made to suffer. But I and my sons remain here." Not a man left his post, and the old King remained with his troops. And King Peter, broken down by age and sickness, delayed his retreat through Albania to the last moment, and shared the bread of the common soldiers, while the Prince Regent never left the troops, and remained in Albania until the last of them had embarked. The re-organisation of Serbia's army having been accomplished, there was little time lost in getting it over to Macedonia, and soon the splendid men were fighting once more within their country's frontiers. To them was left the task and the honour of winning back Monastir, and right gallantly that was done.

To-day our Serbian Allies are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Entente troops in Macedonia, and their courage, endurance, and cheerfulness are deeply admired. Their eyes are fixed on the fields of Moravo, and their thoughts on the unification of their race, working out their own destiny in peacefulness after the terrible ordeals which they have undergone in the cause of Right. Every foot of Serbian soil redeemed gives to them their own people, weak from hunger and mental suffering, sick and in every way distressed. The villages have been destroyed, live stock driven away, centres of rural industry devastated. The mere materialist would ask: Is such a country worth winning back? But the Serbian is not the prey of materialistic ideas. His ideals centre in his manhood. Yet there is the material question of the suffering: clothing and feeding and tending those unable to help themselves. To that end the Serbian Red Cross Society is working, and, sad to say, with

an insufficiency of funds. The call of humanity, if not of direct gratitude, should be answered by every Britisher. There is not a Serbian soldier who has not suffered in the cause of the Allies; there is scarcely a Serbian peasant woman or girl who has not passed through grief through loss of loved ones—father, husband, or brother; and it surely is not too much to ask Britishers to remember what course the Serbian army took when the preponderance of German, Austrian, and Bulgarian guns and ammunition forced them back. As I have said, the army did not march down to Salonica to embarrass the Allies, but turned to the snow-covered mountains and the inevitable starvation and the awfully frequent call of death. "In leaving the fertile plains of Moravo," says M. Savic, "and the lovely hills of Sumadia, they saw before them, rising like an awful menace, the barren, inhospitable Albanian mountains, where unspeakable hardships awaited them. . . . Unflinchingly they drank the cup of humiliation and disaster to the dregs."

These articles have been compiled with the hope that our people, British people, on gaining a better appreciation of Serbian character and Serbia's sacrifices for civilisation and freedom, may more generously help—the widow with her mite and the rich man from his plenty.



